



Planning Department

SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS - 4/25/05

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MEMORANDUM

To: Don P. Johnson, Town Manager **Date:** April 22, 2005
From: Roland Bartl, AICP, Town Planner *R. B.*
Subject: ARRT – Federal Funds Disposition

I am writing as Acton's representative on the ARRT steering committee established under ARRT inter-municipal agreement. MassHighway has informed us that the Federal Highway Administration has notified them that they want to close the acquisition grant account as they have not seen any use of it lately. If that happens any remaining funds would be lost. MassHighway has said that they will try to preserve the account, but were not sure how successful they could be unless we can show a transaction very soon.

Acton is still holding a funding allocation of approximately \$80,000 which can only be used for actual right of way purchases. I am hopeful that we can wrap up the easement acquisition from Wedgewood (Anderson) before this month ends. This acquisition would be at no cost as agreed last year. The MBTA right of way acquisition is another matter. But, based on MBTA's stated policy on rail trail development of their abandoned rights of way, it will likely be at no cost for which the Town could use Federal acquisition funds.

In anticipation of the possible disappearance of Federal funds, I am requesting that the Selectmen give me authority to release Acton's funding allocation to another of the ARRT communities for any right of way purchase they might be able to close on before Federal funding runs out, or to help prevent closure of the account by showing a transaction.

Could you please discuss this with the Board of Selectmen at the earliest opportunity and advise me how I can proceed.